ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES ON THIRD PARTY LOGISTICS: A STUDY IN ORGANIZED INDIAN RETAIL SECTOR

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In

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Introduction

Logistics is essentially a planning orientation and framework that seeks to create a single plan for the flow of product and information through a business (Christopher, 2005).

Jomini 2010 defined logistics as "the practical art of moving armies" and included a vast range of functions involved in moving and sustaining military forces, planning, administration, supply, billeting and encampments, bridge and road building, and even reconnaissance and intelligence insofar as they were related to maneuvers off the battlefield .

Council of Logistics Management (1991), defined logistics as "the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the efficient and effective flow and storage of goods, services, and related information from point of origin to point of consumption for the purpose of conforming to customer requirements"

The logistics industry in India is evolving rapidly and it is the interplay of infrastructure, technology and new types of service providers that will define whether the industry is able to help its customers, reduce their logistics costs and provide effective services. (Chandra and Jain, 2007). Third party logistics (3PL) is drawing attention at government, industrial, academicians and practitioner's levels (Gupta et. al, 2011).

Third party logistics (3PL) is a business dynamic of growing importance all over the world. However, it is at a very nascent stage in India, though some domestic and multinational companies are trying to establish themselves in this sector (Sahay and Mohan, 2003).

There is growing need in third-party logistics (3PL) or logistics outsourcing among practicing managers and academicians alike as shippers worldwide are increasingly outsourcing their logistical activities in order to reduce supply chain complexities, curtail costs and overheads, and expand their global reach. By outsourcing logistics, companies are able to not only focus on their core competencies, but also realize better delivery performance and therefore customer satisfaction.

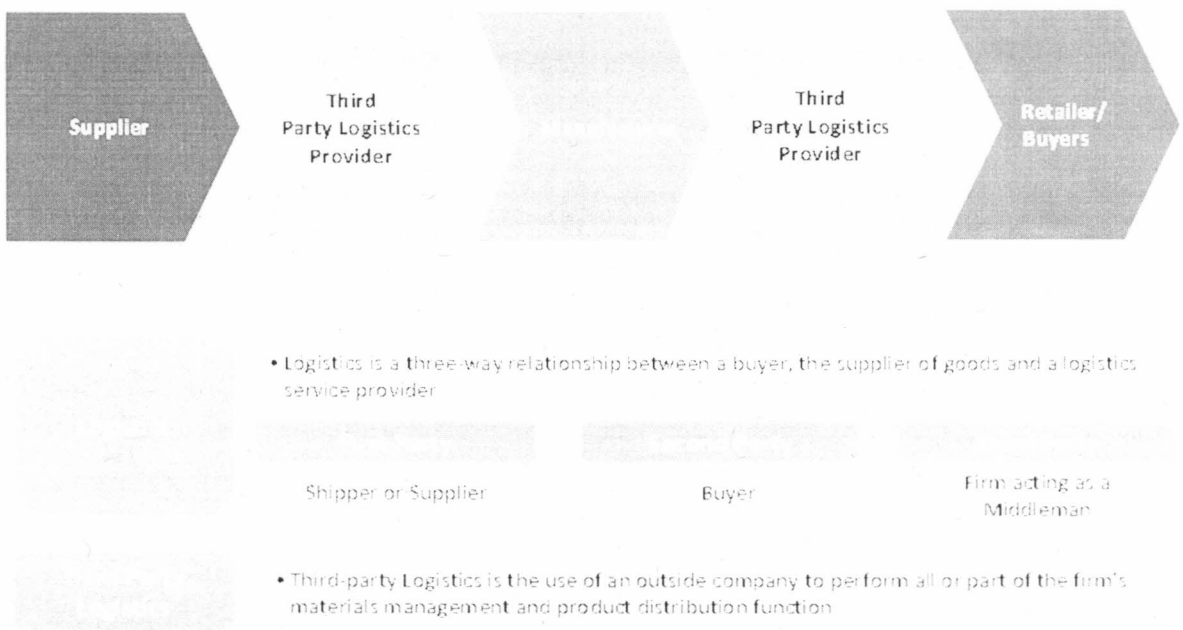
The logistics industry is a very competitive one with a large number of international players having presence in many countries. The service providers have a number of issues to address, such as pricing pressures, high costs of operations and low returns on investments, hiring and retaining talent, and pressure from clients to broaden the range of service offerings and internationalize operations, demand for customized solutions and more value-added services, besides infrastructure bottlenecks and government regulations. The service providers have to continuously upgrade their networks and systems and equip themselves with the latest

technologies to carry out their complex operations and provide the best logistics services to their customers. This involves huge capital expenditure and an ongoing maintenance costs. Logistics companies the world over are increasingly investing in technologies like Warehouse Management System (WMS), Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP), Global Positioning System (GPS) and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) to provide the best logistics services increasing transparency and efficiency of supply chains of their customers.

3PL

Third-party logistics (3PL) refers to outsourcing transportation, warehousing and other logistics related activities to a 3PL service provider that were originally performed in-house.

Third-party logistics (3PL) or logistics outsourcing is gaining importance as more and more corporations across the world, unable to manage their complex supply chains, are outsourcing logistics activities to the 3PL or logistics service providers. Globalization has led to rapid rise in the need for outsourcing logistics by companies looking for readymade distribution channels to an entity with local expertise. Also the process of global sourcing by companies and supply chains increasingly becoming global and complex has given impetus to the growth of 3PL services.


Supplier
Third Party Logistics Provider
Third Party Logistics Provider
Retailer/ Buyers
• Logistics is a three-way relationship between a buyer, the supplier of goods and a logistics service provider
Shipper or Supplier
Buyer
Firm acting as a Middleman
• Third-party Logistics is the use of an outside company to perform all or part of the firm's materials management and product distribution function

Source: Research on India – Third Party Logistics – India, November – 2009. www.researchonindia.com

The India Retail Industry is the largest among all the industries, accounting for over 10 per cent of the country's GDP and around 8 per cent of the employment. The Retail Industry in India has come forth as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industries with several players entering the market.

Logistics services for Retail Industry or Retail Logistics as popularly referred to, is the integrated management of the range of activities required to keep retail outlets adequately replenished with supplies.

(Fernie,et al, 2010) This paper provides one of the few contributions to appraise the research undertaken on retail logistics in the UK over the last 20-30 years & illustrates how retailers have control of the supply chain, drawing upon examples from both the grocery and fashion sectors. Challenges for the future include macro-environment issues such as climate change and recession in addition to improvements in existing in operations with regard to e-fulfilment and implementation of RFID technologies

Organizational Approaches

Direct Delivery (DD)- Speed is the name of the game in today's retail landscape. How quickly products are purchased from store shelves depends on a myriad of factors: consumer preference, special promotions, and brand recognition, to name just a few. The real trick to gaining speed and increasing your inventory turns is to ensure you have a successful and cost-efficient replenishment system.
Over the last few years, many consumer goods manufacturers are increasingly using a Direct-to-Store Delivery (DSD) delivery model as an alternative to traditional wholesaler and distributor networks. A DSD model establishes a "closed loop" network from the consumer good manufacturer's warehouse to various retail outlets, making multiple stops before returning to the point of origin.

Regional Distribution Centre (RDC) A distribution center for a set of products is a warehouse or other specialized building, often with refrigeration or air conditioning, which is stocked with products (goods) to be redistributed to retailers, to wholesalers, or directly to consumers. A distribution center is a principal part, the order processing element, of the entire order fulfillment process. Distribution centers are usually thought of as being demand driven

Milk Run Method Delivery method for mixed loads from different suppliers. Instead of each of several (say 5) suppliers sending a vehicle every week to meet the weekly needs of a customer, one vehicle visits each supplier on a daily basis and picks up deliveries for that customer. This way, while still five vehicle loads are shipped every week, each vehicle load delivers the full daily requirements of the customer from each supplier. This method gets its

name from the dairy industry practice where one tanker collects milk every day from several dairy farmers for delivery to a milk processing firm.

Cross docking is a logistics procedure where products from a supplier or manufacturing plant are distributed directly to a customer or retail chain with marginal to no handling or storage time. Cross docking takes place in a distribution docking terminal; usually consisting of trucks and dock doors on two (inbound and outbound) sides with minimal storage space. The name 'cross docking' explains the process of receiving products through an inbound dock and then transferring them across the dock to the outbound transportation dock.

In simple terms, inbound products arrive through transportation such as trucks/trailers, and are allocated to a receiving dock on one side of the 'cross dock' terminal. Once the inbound transportation has been docked its products can be moved either directly or indirectly to the outbound destinations; they can be unloaded, sorted and screened to identify their end destinations. After being sorted, products are moved to the other end of the 'cross dock' terminal via a forklift, conveyor belt, pallet truck or another means of transportation to their destined outbound dock. When the outbound transportation has been loaded, the products can then make their way to customers.

The hub and spoke model is a system which makes transportation much more efficient by greatly simplifying a network of routes. It is extensively used in commercial aviation for both passengers and freight, and the model has also been adopted in the technology sector as well. Delta Airlines pioneered the method in 1955, but it wasn't until the 1970s, when the FedEx company took advantage of the concept, that the method really took hold, revolutionizing the way airlines were run.

The model is named after a bicycle wheel, which has a strong central hub with a series of connecting spokes. In the sense of aviation, an airline routes all of its traffic through one central hub or hubs; Dallas and Detroit, for example. Almost all of the airline's aircraft flies on spokes between destinations and the hub, with very few direct flights between other destinations. Routing all the traffic through the hub actually makes the overall system more efficient, although it can be frustrating for passengers at times.

Literature Review

Logistics systems developed extensively during World War II (1939-1945). Throughout this war, the United States and its allies' armies were more efficient than Germany's. German army stores were damaged extensively, but Germany could not impose the same destruction on its enemies' stores. The US army could supply whatever was needed by its forces at the right time, at the right place, and in the most economical way. From that time, several new and advanced military logistic techniques started to take off. Gradually, logistics started to evolve as an art and science (Berglund et al, 1999).

This study is aimed to present the benefit of Turkish 3PL firms obtained by the use of ABC and determines whether benefits of the cost data obtained from ABC methods regarding their fields of use by the kinds of 3PL firms (Agca ,2011).

(Malik ,2012) The present study deals with the identification of the factors affecting the success of organized retail sector and analyzing their importance. These factors are broadly classified as micro and macro-level factors. The latter includes all the environmental factors that are largely uncontrollable. The micro level factors provide an individualistic point of view, i.e. it includes parameters that may affect customer's perception and purchase behavior.

(Subrahmaniam ,2010) The word shipping relates to moving a material from one area to another or one sea port to another (domestic or international). In the olden days the 4 related modes of transport like sea, air, road & rail were independent of each other. Today, there is a need to combine the modes & use them in conjunction to for efficiently in cost & to save time.

(Deobhankar ,2005) The author has connected Supply Chain to the most important sector of India - The Pharmaceutical Industry which is highly fragmented but organized, worth $4.5 billion and growing at 15% annually. The author has well drafted the SWOT Analysis. He has explained the challenges faced due to high costs and regulatory pressures and lastly mentioned problems relating to Production Planning & Scheduling problems and suggested Supply Chain techniques which can overcome the issues.

Various criteria for selection of 3PL have been listed in the literature which are discussed in the present literature review. Every shipper will select the criteria suitable to its own

requirement which have to be dynamically reviewed time to time so as to fit in the ever changing environment. (Sachdeva,et al. 2011)

Outsourcing of logistics function is a business dynamics of growing importance all over the world. A growing awareness that competitive advantage comes from the delivery process as much as from the product has been instrumental in upgrading logistics from its traditional backroom function to a strategic boardroom function (Razzaque and Sheng,1998)

According to research done by Armstrong & Associates, Inc., global gross 3PL revenues in 2007 were USD 487 billion, out of which the U.S. accounted for USD 122 billion or about 25% of the global pie (Quinn 2008).

Although due to global recession and hike in fuel prices, the 3PL sector, like any other sector, has been hit, there are opportunities as well for 3PL companies since shippers are outsourcing transportation, warehousing and other logistical activities like never before in order to reduce costs and remain competitive (Anonymous 2008a).

So far, there was lack of clarity on 3PL and their roles and responsibilities. However, very recently the role of a 3PL has been recognized by the U.S. federal law. The law accords the status of an intermediary such as a carrier or forwarder to a 3PL provider and specifically stipulates that a 3PL provider is not to be considered a manufacturer, distributor or retailer, exempting 3PL companies to a great extent from stringent legislations and regulations applicable to manufacturers, distributors and retailers towards rising concerns over cargo security and consumer safety (O'Connor and Anderson 2008).

Outsourcing, third party logistics services (3PL) and contract logistics generally mean the same thing. It involves the use of external companies to perform logistics functions, which have traditionally been performed within an organization. The functions performed by third party logistics service providers can encompass the entire logistics process or select activities within that process. A key rationale for outsourcing of logistics functions is the intensified globalization of businesses. During the last two decades, globalization has emerged as a major force of shaping business strategies, leading firms to develop products designed for a global market and to source components globally (Cooper, 1993).

This has led to more complex supply chains requiring larger involvement of managers in logistics functions. Lack of specific knowledge of customs, tax regulations and infrastructure

of destination countries has forced firms to acquire expertise of third party logistics service providers. As a result firms are concentrating their energies on core activities and leaving the rest to specialist firm (Sahay and Mohan, 2003).

There are three waves of entrants into the 3PL market. The first wave dates back to the 1980s or even earlier with the emergence of what are called traditional LSPs. The 3PL activities of these companies have emerged from a traditionally strong position in either transportation or warehousing (Berglund et al. in 1999).

The second wave dates from the early 1990s when a number of network players, mainly parcel and express companies such as DHL, TNT, and UPS, started their 3PL activities. Usually, the 3PL activities of these companies are based on their worldwide air-express networks and their experience with expedited freight. The third wave dates from the late 1990s. Currently, a number of players entering the 3PL market can be seen from areas such as IT, management consultancy, and financial services. These players are working together with players from the first and second waves. In most cases, several shippers and providers are involved (Berglund, et. al., 1999).

Lieb et al. (1993), Dapiran et al. (1996), and Bhatnagar et al. (1999) have observed that the future usage of third party logistics services is a function of the current level of satisfaction of the firm with the logistics services provider. The authors have also explored the changes in the level and the nature of outsourcing of logistics services by the user firms. All the above studies indicate high levels of satisfaction with third party logistics services providers, which will translate in increased outsourcing in the future. Typically, firms start with the outsourcing of few logistics services, moving over to activities which have maximum impact on logistics performance and then increase scope of usage of logistics services with perceived and quantifiable impact on overall business performance.

3PL companies need to put in a lot of efforts in branding exercises, and differentiate in terms of their products/services and projecting themselves environment-friendly. The important differentiators identified by Lieb and Lieb (2008) are company's IT capability, geographic coverage, breadth of services and non-asset approach. Many top global 3PL companies such as Exel Logistics, Keystone Dedicated Logistics, Logistics Management Solutions and Transplace are asset-free (Anonymous 2008c; Anonymous 2008d).

Lieb (2008b) finds similarities in industry dynamics with global 3PL markets such as pricing pressure, demanding customers, pressure to internationalize operations and shortage of management talent. Within the Asia-Pacific region

A study of Hong Kong 3PL providers also found that a combined strategy of cost and differentiation performed best with respect to financial performance, followed by a pure differentiation strategy, which in turn outperformed a pure cost-
based strategy (Yeung et al. 2006).
However, each and every 3PL provider may not be game for mergers and acquisitions. For them, partnering with other 3PL providers and acting as a fourth-party logistics (4PL) provider or Lead Logistics Provider (LLP) make more sense in terms of providing a single point of contact to shippers and offering one-stop solutions to all their logistical requirements (Trunick 2008)

Rationale of the study

There is growing interest in third-party logistics (3PL) or logistics outsourcing among practicing managers and academicians alike as shippers worldwide are increasingly outsourcing their logistical activities in order to reduce supply chain complexities, curtail costs and overheads, and expand their global reach. By outsourcing logistics, companies are able to not only focus on their core competencies, but also realize better delivery performance and therefore customer satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study

- The emergence of the Third-party Logistics Services as a Specialized Supply Chain service providers for smooth functioning of the Organized Indian Retail Sector.
- To assess and examine the current Logistics Sector in India and its future prospects.
- To study the logistics function in Organized Indian Retail Sector.
- To explore the significance of Organized Indian Retail Sector.

Research Methodology

Hypothesis

Based on proposed objectives, a Hypothesis is developed to empirically address the research in question.

H0 There is no difference in the working efficiency of Organized Retail companies in India with the implementation of Third Party Logistics services.

Research Design

Descriptive research method will be adopted to carry out this research

Sample Size

300 is the sample size i.e. 10 Third Party Logistics Service Provider and 290 concerned professionals and executives working in various Organized Retail sector .Special reference to india & analysing Shopper's Stop , Life Styles (as multi brands apparel stores) & Raymond , Arvind (as single brand stores) in term of 3PL.

Data Collection

To determine the usage of third party logistics practices in India, a survey have to be conduct. The survey questionnaire is designed based on the studies carried out on various literatures on Logistics, Third party logistics in India.

The survey instrument focused on the following areas:

(1) Importance of various logistics activities to organizations;
(2) Extent of usage of services offered by third party logistics service providers for carrying out specific logistics activities;
(3) Reasons for outsourcing;
(4) The overall satisfaction with third party logistics service providers; and
(5) The future plans of current users of third party logistics services (Kee-hung Lai, 2004)

Structured questionnaires will be designed and will be distributed to the concerned professionals and executives working in various Organized Retail sector. During the research study both primary and secondary data would be collected.

Primary data: It is necessary to collect first hand and reliable information. For this purpose the researcher will collected the required information by way of phone conversations and also with the help of personal interviews and questionnaire.

Also, data shall be collected from the Logistics companies which currently provide Retail logistics services / 3PL services like DHL, Gati, TNT, TCI Logistics by the help of questionnaire

Questionnaire: - A Structured questionnaire will be prepared for data collected

Secondary Data: The existing retail logistics will be studied from various books, journals and research articles.

Data Analysis

The classified data shall be subject to statistical methods of analyzing and reporting. Appropriate test shall be used for the Null Hypothesis testing. These would provide technical analysis of the data. Reporting shall be in the form of text and would also include, graphs, bar graph, pie charts which would be easy for understanding, analyzing and interpretation of data. Also SPSS software shall be used for computerized data analysis, tabulation and Interpretation of data.

CHAPTER SCHEME

Part - I Descriptive Analysis

Chapter I Introduction and Historical Perpective of Retail sector in India.

Chapter II Review of Literature

Chapter III Research Methodology

Part – II Analysis of Data

Chapter IV Results /Findings

Chapter V Discussion

Chapter VI Summary / Conclusions

Chapter VII References

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